

On July 1 the United States Post Office Department will end, to be replaced by the U.S. Postal Service. The transition caught me in the process of challenging the old mail service to a race, but before I could get the terms of the proposition to Washington, I read that the organization was changing to a government corporation.

You see, last year the weekend mail from Mertzon bound for San Angelo started going by way of Dallas. The copy that I'd mailed to this newspaper was taking from Saturday afternoon until Tuesday of the following week to make the trip. On my speedometer, the newspaper is exactly 27.75 miles from the Mertzon post office, so I'd decided that if the postal dispatchers wanted to run a race from Mertzon to San Angelo, I'd get up my old listening horse Blucher and give them a run.

Blucher has reached his late teens. In his prime he couldn't have outrun the fat lady at the circus. Speed was never his long suit. Physical exertion in any form has always been obnoxious to him. Perspiration or a wet saddle blanket was all it took to ruin his day. Nevertheless, I figured that any outfit who thought the fastest route from Mertzon to San Angelo was to go 250 miles to Dallas and turn around and come back was a dead cinch for us to beat.

Though I wouldn't bet six bits that a veteran jockey could button a silk shirt, I'd bet plenty Old Blucher could swim 27.75 miles of thick molasses in three days. Good grief! Those astronaut fellows were making it to the moon in three days, and every step of the way was uphill.

I don't know what kind of rolling stock the mail packers were using to go to Dallas, nor the kind of filling stations that were supplying their road maps. But I do know that their time would have been easy for us to beat under any circumstances.

Two or three times I thought of calling the San Angelo office to ask them who was doing their mail routing. When the idea was fresh, the telephone was always out. Then when the wire service was in, I'd forget to call them. We never were actually without some form of communication. The old boys who run regular sales routes through Mertzon are used to carrying messages to Angelo. It's part of their job to keep us linked with the rest of the world.

Registering a written complaint would have been out of order. Once the civil service starts on a course, it's better to allow them to wear it out. Get a government office riled up and they are apt to send your mail around Cape Horn.

The ladies running the Mertzon office did their best to dispatch the mail on a straight course, but the best field goal kicker alive couldn't kick a low spiral if the goal post was 500 miles in the wrong direction.

Any man who pays over \$200 worth of taxes a year deserves more consideration from his government. Tax payers of my caliber ought to be able to send a letter 27.75 miles in less than three days. What's wrong is that they earn their money so easy that they don't appreciate it. They'd show a lot more hustle if they had to sell wool instead of high priced stamps.

I am going to hold off on the bet until I see which direction the new service routes my mail. Meanwhile, I hope the present routing agents don't infiltrate the Boy Scouts. It'd be a might pitiful sight to see a troop of tenderfoots trying to go from Mertzon to San Angelo by way of Dallas.